GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:22
ANSWERED ON:18.11.2002
ENVIRONMENT CONSERVATION AND EXPLOITATION OF FORESTS MINERAL RESERVES
JAYASHREE BANERJEE

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether norms for maintaining coordination and balance between environment conservation and exploitation of forests & mineral reserves have been prescribed/defined;

(b) whether norms for maintaining balance between preservation of tribal cultural values and their life-style and exploitation of forests and mineral reserves have also been precisely prescribed/defined;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor;

(d) whether development of Madhya Pradesh has allegedly been hampered for want of these norms; and

(e) if so, the remedial steps proposed to be taken by the Government in this regard?

Answer

MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT & FORESTS (SHRI T.R.BAALU)

(a) & (b) The existing policies of the Govt. and the statutes seek to maintain the balance between environment conservation and exploitation of forests & mineral reserves. These include the National Forest Policy, 1988, the National Conservation Strategy and Policy Statement on Environment and Development, 1992, the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 and the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980. The Ministry of Environment & Forests has also issued the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Notification, 1994 whereby the developmental projects specified therein are required to obtain prior environmental clearance. Under these laws/ regulations, every proposal requiring environment /forestry clearance is appraised and, while according clearance, suitable safeguards are laid down to mitigate impacts on the environment and local communities including tribals. In order to involve local communities in the decision making process, public hearing has been mandatory under the EIA Notification 1994 and, in cases involving forestry clearance only, endorsement of proposal by the Gram Panchayat / Local Body is necessary if the project is likely to have impacts on the local community. Projects granted clearance are monitored for compliance of the stipulated clearance conditions.

(c),(d) &(e) Do not arise.